

In this Issue: **WRP, Mentoring Month & More**

WHAT'S NEW

Workforce Recruitment Program Opens

The 2017 Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) database is now available! Managed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity, the WRP is a recruitment and referral program that connects federal employers with highly qualified students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent jobs. The WRP is also available to private-sector employers seeking to diversify their workforce with people with disabilities, whether as short- or long-term hires. Learn more about the WRP for [federal](#) or [private](#) employers.

Strengthening Inclusion in Federal Agencies

In a recently issued final rule amending the regulations implementing Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission updated the responsibilities of federal agencies to take affirmative action to employ, retain and promote qualified individuals with disabilities. Key to the updated regulations is set representation goals, specifically 12 percent for individuals with disabilities and 2 percent for individuals with specifically defined "targeted" disabilities. The updates also require the provision of personal assistance services for federal employees who need assistance in performing activities such as eating or using the restroom. [Learn more about the new regulations.](#)

Increasing Equal Opportunity in Apprenticeship

Last month the U.S. Department of Labor announced updated rules regarding equal employment opportunity in Registered Apprenticeship programs. Reflecting new approaches for increasing workplace inclusion and protecting against discrimination, the updates will help sponsors of apprenticeship programs reach a larger and more diverse pool of workers, including women, minorities and people with disabilities. A tried and tested method for building a skilled workforce and growing a business, apprenticeship programs exist in a wide range of occupations, including traditional fields such as construction, as well as high-growth fields like health care and information technology. [Read the press release](#) or [register for a January 12 webinar on the updates.](#)

Mental Health Conditions in the Workplace

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) recently released a new resource providing guidance on the workplace rights of people with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions. In a question-and-answer format, this new publication addresses topics such as disclosure of mental health conditions and the process for requesting reasonable accommodations. In addition, it provides information on steps employees can take in situations of harassment or discrimination based on their mental health conditions. [Read the publication.](#)

ASKEARN.ORG SPOTLIGHT



Mentoring Primers

January is National Mentoring Month, which raises awareness about the value of mentoring to young people both personally and professionally. While career mentoring can play an important role in the employment success of all young people, it may be especially beneficial to young people with disabilities new to the workforce. But it also benefits their employers by boosting retention and in turn inclusion over the long term. To help employers understand the value of mentoring and start mentoring programs, EARN offers mentoring primers for both [federal agencies](#) and [private employers](#).

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 12, 2017

Twitter Chat: “#DisabilityMentors: Supporting the Career Success of Young People with Disabilities

In honor of National Mentoring Month, the Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE) in collaboration with one of its members, the American Association of People with Disabilities, will host a Twitter chat focused on career mentoring and its role in helping foster success for young people with disabilities as well as the employers who stand to benefit from their skills and talents. The featured guest will be Derek Shields, co-chair of the National Disability Mentoring Coalition (NDMC). To participate in the conversation, please use the hashtag #DisabilityMentors. [Follow the CDE on Twitter](#) or [learn more about the NDMC](#).

January 19 2017

Webinar: The Future Needs Everyone: Promoting Workplace Success for Millennials with Disabilities

Join the Mid-Atlantic Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Center for a presentation on how employers can best welcome and support young people with disabilities as they transition from school to work and pursue their careers. Presenters will share insights, experiences and results from an online dialogue event sponsored by The HSC Foundation and led by the HSC's Youth Transition Collaborative that focused on fostering workplace inclusion. [Register for the webinar](#).

February 14, 2017

Event and Webcast: Annual Disability Statistics Compendium Release

The Annual Compendium of Disability Statistics and Report on Disability is a web-based tool that pools disability statistics published by various federal agencies. The most recent version will be released on February 14, on the second day of a “State-of-the-Science”

conference sponsored by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics. For those unable to attend in person in Washington, D.C., the event can be viewed live via webcast. [Learn more about the event.](#)

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EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT



MDI

Peter McDermott, President and CEO of MDI, a plastic packaging manufacturer based in Minnesota, recently penned an article in IndustryWeek highlighting the positive impact inclusive hiring has had on his company's workplace culture. MDI's workforce is comprised of 50 percent people with disabilities, and within the organization, people with disabilities hold a range of production positions, working in tandem with employees without disabilities. [Read more about MDI's inclusive hiring practices.](#)

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The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) is a resource for employers seeking to recruit, hire, retain and advance qualified employees with disabilities. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy under a cooperative agreement with The Viscardi Center. For more information, visit AskEARN.org

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